PODCAST AND EDITORIAL RESOURCE

Conversations Worth Having

Six interview concepts with substantive angles for nonprofit leadership and philanthropic audiences.

01

The Answer Is Not a Better Ask

Why improving solicitation technique may be less important than changing the donor relationship itself.

02

Ask for Wisdom Before Money

How engaging prospective donors in defining solutions can create more meaningful philanthropic partnerships.

03

More Money, Fewer Donors

What donor concentration means for nonprofit funding strategies, and where smaller donors still matter.

04

Why CEOs Must Lead Major-Gift Campaigns

The responsibilities of executive leadership and boards in cultivating transformational commitments.

05

Can 20 Gifts Transform an Organization?

How a focused campaign model works, what readiness looks like, and when it may not be appropriate.

06

The Human Motivation Behind Major Gifts

How personal meaning, participation, and a commitment to solving problems influence major-gift relationships.

THREE TAKEAWAYS FOR LISTENERS

- Major gifts begin with understanding what motivates a person, not merely identifying their capacity to give.
- Nonprofit CEOs and boards have a direct role in building relationships around consequential solutions.
- A focused transformational campaign requires organizational readiness, a credible plan, and authentic donor participation.

Suggested Host Questions

Eighteen optional questions arranged by conversation theme. Hosts may select and adapt freely.

FUNDRAISING PHILOSOPHY

01. After more than five decades in fundraising, what do nonprofit leaders most often misunderstand about major gifts?
02. What do you mean when you say the answer is not simply a better ask?
03. How does human motivation influence the development of major-gift donor relationships?
04. What distinguishes a transformational gift from a conventional large donation?

DONOR ENGAGEMENT & CAMPAIGN DESIGN

05. What does it mean to ask for a donor’s wisdom before asking for money?
06. How can a prospective donor help shape a solution without taking control of the nonprofit’s mission?
07. Why focus on 12 to 20 gifts, and what kinds of organizations are suited to that approach?
08. What must be in place before an organization pursues a transformational campaign?
09. What are the most common mistakes that undermine a promising donor relationship?

CEO & BOARD LEADERSHIP

10. Why should a nonprofit CEO personally lead major-gift relationship development?
11. What should boards contribute beyond their own financial giving?
12. How does the development professional’s role change in this model?
13. Can smaller nonprofits realistically implement this strategy?

THE FUTURE OF PHILANTHROPY

14. What is changing as charitable giving becomes more concentrated among wealthy donors?
15. How should nonprofit leaders think about the role of tax incentives in major giving?
16. Are organizations sometimes more focused on funding operations than presenting solutions?
17. How did your experience establishing the $100 million Fred Hutch campaign shape your thinking?
18. What one change would you encourage a nonprofit CEO to make tomorrow?

INTERVIEW BOOKINGS

John C. Shimer | john@20giftcampaign.com

Christian Shimer, Media Representative | christian@20giftcampaign.com